

# Mental Health Intervention Team

February 2008



## TRAINING KICKS OFF FEBRUARY 25, 2008.

The MHIT Pilot Course was conducted at Police Headquarters, Parramatta from February 25<sup>th</sup> till February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO; and the Director General of NSW Health Professor Debora Picone.

The Pilot was the first training component and was launched by Deputy Commissioner Owens and the pilot's patron, NSW



Deputy Commissioner Owens, NSW Governor Marie Bashir, Superintendent Donohue and Professor Picone at the launch of the MHIT Pilot 25 February 2009.

## THE POLICE INVOLVED:

Twenty one police from Eastern Beaches, Penrith and Tuggerah Lakes LAC's were provided with specialist training in dealing with persons who suffer from mental illness or disabilities. The group mainly comprised one Inspector, one Sergeant and five Constable's/Senior Constables.

A further 90 police will be trained during five more education courses to be completed by June 2008.

At the completion of the pilot course all participants were issued with the official MHIT badge by Deputy Commissioner Owens. This badge will identify these police as having received specialist training in mental health.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

Numerous external health agencies and field experts contributed to the creation of the education package and several were able to present at the course.

Guest speakers included Dr. Adam Woodstock, Senior Staff Specialist, Drug Health Services; and Jane Randall, Clinical Psychologist, Schizophrenia Foundation.

## ROLE PLAYS

Day four commenced with a very informative presentation on communication skills from Inspector Andrew Lahye from the NSWPF Negotiators. This was followed by role plays involving the course participants and three Clinical Nurse Consultants Scott Lamont, Scott Brunero and Mari Evans who assisted by playing the role of the mental health patient. Each of the trial LACs were given a scenario based on a different mental health illness (Borderline Personality Disorder, Schizophrenia & Depression). Course participants utilized the information and skills they had acquired over the four days to effectively deal with each situation.

### ROLE PLAYS



## CONSUMER PANEL

A consumer panel comprising three males living with a mental illness (Schizophrenia and other illnesses) attended the course on day three. Each of them summarized their life experience of living with their illness and how previous dealings with police had impacted on or affected them in different ways. Police were then given the opportunity to ask questions in more intimate smaller groups as the three consumers made their way around to the different groups.

The participants found this session very informative and identified that people who suffer from the same illness may present in different ways and are able to function in day to day life on various levels.

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**#MHIT**

## **INTERNET & INTRANET SITES**

Both the MHIT Internet and Intranet sites have been updated. Forms, Presentations, Minutes, Project News and other general publications can now be accessed on these sites.

The Intranet site can be found in the following location:-

Organizational Units/  
Commissioners Inspectorate/  
Executive Support Group/  
Project Management.

Internet Site:-

NSWPF Internet Site/  
Community Issues/ Mental  
Health.

## **FUTURE TRAINING:**

Five more MHIT training courses will be completed prior to the end of June 2008.

Proposed course dates:-

7-10 April, 2008.

5-8 May, 2008.

12-15 May, 2008.

26-29 May, 2008.

2-5 June, 2008.

If you would like to apply to do the MHIT training, or would like to find out more information, contact your EDO or the MHIT staff direct, alternatively you can refer to the MHIT Brochure which can be accessed on the MHIT Intranet site.

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Below is an extract of an email the MHIT received from Leading Senior Constable Karen CUTTING from Penrith LAC. Karen was the OIC in the role play involving the female suffering from Borderline Personality Disorder

*"Hi MHIT team, first day back at work after course and guess what??..first job is mental illness related...border line personality disorder who hasn't taken her medication for the past three days, original job was a domestic. The course came flooding back and I think the whole event went better for having some background knowledge".*

Karen dealt with the job appropriately, and it's evident by the Event that some of the knowledge she gained on the MHIT Pilot course assisted her to deal with the situation on this occasion. E32745509 relates.

Great work Karen!

\*\* The MHIT is very interested to hear how the police that received training are dealing with situations in the field – please email your experiences to #MHIT \*\*